

**DECLARATION
OF THE
Assembly of Divines,**

**By way of Detestation of this
Abominable and Blasphemous**

OPINION,

*That God is, and hath an hand in, and
is the Author of the Sinfulnesses of his
People;*

Mentioned in a Book Incituled,

**Comfort for Believers, about their
Sins and Troubles.**

**Together with the Orders of both Houses of Parlia-
ment for the Burning of the said Book by the hand of
the common Hangman.**

LONDON:

**Printed by Iohn Field for Ralph Smith, at the
Signe of the Bible in Cornhill, neer the Royall
Exchange, July 25. 1645.**

(2)

Die Sabbathi, 17 Julij, 1645.

Complaint being this day made to the Lords in Parliament by the Assembly of Divines, That a certain blasphemous and Hereticall Book, Intituled, *Comfort for Believers, about their Sins and Troubles*, is printed and published, being written by *John Ancher*, Mr. of Arts, sometime Preacher at *All-Hallowes Lumbardestreets London*, deceased; which unlesse suppressed, will prove very mischievous and Desegatory to the Church and State: Their Lordships much abhorring the said Blasphemies, do award and adjudge:

1. That the said Book shall be burnt by the hand of the Common-Hangman, in the new Pallace *Westminster*, in the midst of *Cheapside*, and in the middle of *Smithfield*, in the Countie of *Middlesex*, withall convenient speed.

2. That the Printer shall be found out, who is to declare to this house by what Authority, and by whose direction he printed and published the said Book.

3. That all the said Books shall be called in, and no more to be sold, upon the Displeasure of this House; And that all such who have any of the said Books in their hands, as well private persons as Book-sellers, shall bring them unto the Sheriffs of *London* or one of them, as they will answer the contrary at their perils unto this House.

4. That the Assembly of Divines are desired to draw up a Detestation of the said Book, which is publicly to be read by an Officer at the burning thereof, And that some of the said Assembly be present at the same time.

*Jo: Brown Cleric.
Parliamentorum.*

(3)
Die Luna, 14. Julii, 1645.

Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That a Book Intituled, *Comfort for Believers about their Sins and Troubles*, shall be forthwith publickely burnt by the hand of the common Hang-man; Some of them in the Pallace-yard, and other some in Cheapside, Smithfield, Pauls Church-yard, and the Exchange: And that the Master and Wardens of the Company of Stationers, and every other person in whose hands any of them do now remain, do deliver the same to the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, who are hereby required to see this Order put in due execution.

H: Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

Ordered, &c. That the Assembly of Divines do appoint some of their Members to be present at the burning of these Books, and to declare to the people, the Abominableness of it; and if there be cause, to vindicate the Author.

H: Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

(4)
A short Declaration of the Assembly

OF
DIVINES.

Agreed upon *Nemine contradicente.*

AS it hath pleased the Honourable Houses of Parliament, out of their pious care for preserving Religion pure, from the leaven of pernicious and Blasphemous Doctrine, to Order the burning of this most scandalous Book, so have they further appointed us to declare the abominableness thereof unto the people: And we doubt not but every good Christian, as soon as he shall hear the scope and contents of it, will, together with us, detest the horrid Blasphemy therein asserted, and acknowledge the godly zeal, wisdom, and justice of Authority, in Commanding it, as an execrable thing to be taken away, that it may not remain amongst us, to provoke Gods wrath, and to produce such perillous and pernicious fruits, whereby the souls of many may be corrupted to their everlasting destruction.

For whereas, that most vile and Blasphemous Assertion, whereby God is avowed to be the Author of sin, hath hitherto by the generall consent of Christian Teachers and writers, both Ancient, and Modern, and these as well Papists as Protestants, been not disclaimed only, but even detested and abhorred: yet

in this book it is, not closely intimated, or occasionally hinted, or inconsiderately and through inadvertency stumbled upon, but openly, in expresse termes, and in a very foul manner propounded, maintained, and purposely at large prosecuted, to wit,

a. That God is, and hath an hand in, and is the Author of the sinfulnesses of his people. a. Pag. 37.

b. That he is the Author not of those actions alone, in and with which sin is, but of the very Pravity, Ateity, Anomy, Irregularity and sinfulness itself which is in them. b. Pag. 34.

c. That God hath more hand in mens sinfulness, then they themselves. c. Pag. 37.

d. That the Creatures sin doth produce the greatest good, either in Gods glory, or in the creatures happiness, as the next cause thereof, and that all that good is onely brought about by sin. d. Pag. 38, 39.

e. That it is as Incongruous and Inconvenient to make God the Author of the Afflictions of the creature, as of the sins. e. Pag. 39.

f. That by sins Believers are as much nurtured and fitted for Heaven as by any thing else. f. Pag. 48.

g. That God fits Believers for service in this world, by leading them into sins. g. Pag. 42.

h. That no course is so full, to remove or prevent sinfull or pernicious troubles for sin, as this looking on God the Author of it, and the good which he brings

“ brings about by it ; which, because it is rarely done by Believers, and indeed hardly known, he therefore professeth to have enlarged himself upon it.

In these and many other like tearms hath he set forth this blasphemous Doctrine.

And further, hee condemneth our Orthodox Writers, for that they have only granted,

i. Pag. 36,
37.

i. That God is willing sin should be, and that he permits it, and orders circumstances about its production, and over-rules it, and hath an hand in, and is the Author of the physicall or morall act, in and with which sin is, saying that they have herein erred on the other hand, and made sin more of the Creature, and it self, and lesse from God then it is.

Besides, the main scope of the Book is to persuade men,

k. Pag. 4.

k. Not to be oppressed or perplexed in heart, for any thing whatsoever befalls them either in sin or affliction: As if our Saviour when he saith, Let not your hearts be troubled (for that is the ground upon which he builds) had intended to dehorte his Disciples from being troubled for their sins.

Very great is both the danger and scandall which would from so detestable a Position as this arise, if it should be suffered without controule to be published and dispersed abroad, especially in such a time as this, when on the one hand multitudes make use of the Specious name of Libetty for a cloak of naughtinesse, and of admitting, and professing many perverse and corrupt opinions, exceeding injurious to the Gospel of Christ,

Christ, and to the power of godlinesse: and on the other hand, many watch for our halting, and glory in nothing more against us, then in those advantages which the weaknesse and instability of such as are carried about with every winde of Doctrine, and are not settled and rooted in the truth, doth most unhappily minister unto them, to the unspeakable prejudice of the Church of Christ, and obstructing of that blessed Reformation, which is by all good men so earnestly desired:

Exceeding dangerous it is unto the souls of men, both as a means to instill into them blasphemous and impure conceits of the Majesty of our most holy God, as also by working them to a slighting, and disregarding of sin; and consequently letting loose the reins to all corrupt and licentious living (for by how much the lesse the trouble is after sin committed, by so much the greater usually is the boldnesse in the Committing of it)

And the scandall hence arising is every whit as great, both in regard of the offence, which is thereby given unto the Reformed Churches, who in their publick Confessions, make Satan, and man himself the only causes or Authors of sin, and some of them do in those their Confessions by name damne this wicked Position: And also in regard of the great advantage which it giveth to our Common adversaries the Papists, who have hitherto only calumniously charged the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches with so odious a crime (in the mean time confessing that we do in words deny it as well as they themselves) whereas now should this book be tolerated, they might justly insult over us, and publish to the world, that now in the

the Church of England it was openly, and impudently maintained, That God is the Author of sin. Then which there is not any one point, whereby they labour in their Sermons and popular Orations, to cast a greater *Odium* (though most injuriously) upon the Reformed Churches.

And albeit the person mentioned to be the Author of this Book hath been of good estimation, for Learning and piety: yet since it hath so deeply wounded the honour and truth of God, We ought not at all to be by any such consideration withheld, from declaring our just detestation of so odious a Book: for if any man, yea if an Angel from Heaven Preach anything contrary to the Gospel of Christ, the Apostle is not afraid to pronounce him accursed: And indeed it is a very dangerous thing (and so much the more dangerous, by how much the more ordinary and usuall) to take up new and corrupt opinions upon trust, only on this inducement, a perswasion which we have of the sanctity of those persons, who are the Authors of them; for we ought to try the spirits whether they be of God, and to search the Scriptures, whether the things taught us be so or no; and having tried all things, to hold fast that which is good, and upon no pretence whatsoever to depart from the form of sound words in the Scriptures delivered unto us, or for the reverence or estimation of any mans person to entertain any such opinions as do in the very words of them asperse the honour and holiness of God, and are by all the Churches of Christ rejected. And therefore most justly hath Authority appointed execution in this manner to be done upon this Book.

July 17. 1645.

Henry Robrough, Scriba.
Adoniram Byfield, Scriba.

